



GLOBAL TOURISM RESILIENCE: IT IS TIME FOR A SHARED EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIC GLOBAL RESPONSE

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry was one of the world's greatest markets; until the world met a pandemic in the 21st century, COVID-19. (Ugur, Akbiyitk 2020). The Global Tourism Resilience Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC) was established in 2018 by the Hon. Edmund Bartlett and Dr. Taleb Rafai (Former Secretary General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization) as a global think tank that focuses exclusively on building resilience and managing crises that disrupt tourism. The tourism industry was one of the world's greatest markets until the world met a pandemic in the 21st century. George Brown College is the first Canadian partner of the Global Tourism Resilience Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC). The satellite Centre will focus on research and development, policy advocacy and communication management, program/project design and management, and training and capacity building in various areas. The designated focus of this Centre will be overall health and wellness.

Introduction

Tourism prior to the pandemic is one of the world's fastest growing and oldest industries. (Narendar 2022). Tourism is a highly respected global product and operates as a valuable commodity and resource for the entire world. Statistics gathered by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), as of 2017 noted that the total contribution of Travel & Tourism accounted for 10.4% of GDP as well as 9.9% of jobs.

When the Covid pandemic hit the global market the WTTC estimated that 62 million jobs were lost. The global tourism downturn also resulted in a 49.1% reduction in GDP due to the reduced level of tourism activity. The highly infectious novel coronavirus continues to thwart the sector and raises serious questions about the present and future survival of the sector. (Kaushal & Srivastava 2021).

Throughout the ages tourism has helped countries develop their economies. Other benefits of tourism have led to disseminated knowledge of different cultures and relationships that have mutually benefited many countries. Tourism has also been the catalyst for global exchanges and cooperation amongst countries. The agreements signed and operationalized between nations have benefited the world in a profound manner. Therefore it has been said that any threat to a country's tourism is therefore a threat to globalization and international harmony. Today, the tourism industry of all countries are vulnerable to a myriad of threats. These disruptions include, among other things, climate change and natural disasters.

Global Tourism Resilience Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC) based at the University of the West Indies' Mona Campus in Jamaica was founded to address these disruptions. The ultimate purpose of the Centre will be to assist destination preparedness, management and recovery from disruptions and/or crises that impact tourism and threaten economies and livelihoods globally. The Centre will be called upon to operate in a global context that is characterised by not only new challenges but also new opportunities for tourism. End result will be improving the tourism product as well as ensuring the sustainability of tourism globally.

The Centre will be positioned to offer several products and services to address tourism resilience and crisis management issues in every region around the world. Some of these products and services include: 1) Climate Change and Disaster Management 2) Entrepreneurial Management 3) Security and Cyber-Security Management 4) Pandemic and Epidemic Management 5) Health and Wellness.

This partnership announcement between the GTRCMC and George Brown College comes at a critical time for the industry as it recovers from a global pandemic and deals with economic fallout from the ongoing war in East Europe. The Centre also focuses on research and anticipating the next inevitable crises and tourism disruptors so that global tourism destinations can better prepare themselves and ensure tourism resilience and ability to recover from these disruptors.

This partnership with the GTRCMC at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica is an exciting opportunity for our Canadian College, particularly for our School of Hospitality & Tourism. The George Brown College School of Tourism and Management has established a worldwide reputation for producing gradu-

ates that are active trailblazers in the field. By building a strong curriculum and marrying program advisory experts the Program has developed a passion for though leadership both locally and globally. The following Program standards and learning outcomes will now be infused with discussion and course material that directly place a focus on reliance in the tourism trade. Our graduates must reliably demonstrate the ability to:

1. Provide professional guest services to enhance customer satisfaction by anticipating, meeting and /or exceeding individual and organizational standards and objectives.
2. Create marketing plans informed and supported by market research, social networks, product knowledge and sales strategies.
3. Contribute to effective management in hospitality, tourism and leisure settings by implementing leadership skills and strategies.
4. Evaluate and apply effective financial management and accounting practices to support operations in the tourism industry.
5. Comply with relevant organizational and workplace systems, processes, policies, standards, legal obligations and regulations, and use knowledge of risk management principles, to support and maintain efficient, productive, safe, secure accessible and healthy tourism operations.
6. Apply principles of teamwork and constructive relationship management to support a positive workplace culture.
7. Integrate hospitality skills and knowledge to promote ongoing personal and professional development.
8. Design and deliver inclusive tourism and hospitality programs, products and services that comply with all relevant legislation, conform to relevant ethical guidelines, and promote best practices of corporate social responsibility.
9. Analyze and implement sustainability practices in tourism and hospitality industry by adapting to environmental, social, cultural, political and economic trends and issues. (GBC Program guide 2022).

One can see that the standards and outcomes listed above will afford the opportunity for our program to embrace principles of resilience very easily. The lessons learnt from this most recent pandemic will be used as examples for assignments and capstone projects. There will be tremendous impact gained by the formation of this Global Tourism Resilience Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC). The immediate impacts will include and are not exclusive to:

1. Leveraging opportunities to and share information and training collateral on a worldwide scale.
2. Enjoy economies of scale when rolling out training programs and material.
3. Exposing students to industry liaisons and allow them to collaborate interprofessionally with world problems.
4. Serve as a magnet to attract faculty from all corners of the globe uniting in solving a common problem.
5. Using social determinants of health to underpin the solutions affecting Tourism.
6. Help secure a better future for this generation and future ones.
7. Allow for the concept of resilience to be top of mind for the operators of businesses and government agencies.

Through the use of colloquia, journal articles and reports, strategic charettes, cap-

stone projects and other student focused activities, the GTRCMC will be a major driving force in building the practices of tourism resilience. It will act as a repository for education and transmission of solutions on a timely basis for the global tourism movement.

Conclusion:

This partnership between the GTRCMC and George Brown College comes at a critical time for the industry as it recovers from a global pandemic and deals with economic fallout from the ongoing war in East Europe. This Centre will focus on Health and Wellness. It will also join a number of sister chapters worldwide focusing on research and anticipating the next inevitable crises and tourism disruptors. The ability to somewhat predict the future as it relates to global tourism impacts will better prepare themselves ensuring tourism resilience and to exercising best practices and promising practices in dealing with these disruptors.

“COVID-19 has provided a perfect storm of uncertainty, ranging from differing entry rules at global borders (e.g., which nationals can be admitted, under what circumstances and with what quarantine or related requirements), refund policies (e.g., airfares, hotels and for business event planners, a range of greater costs), as well as constantly changing infection rates (e.g., Delta variant) and restrictions. The focus for industry and governments around the world will be on practical tools to limit virus spread and reduce outbreaks through digitization of health information, coordination of border openings and controls and ensuring destination readiness through efficient approaches to admitting (or turning away) visitors. Modernization of border control procedures may occur much more rapidly than previously thought as the world works to reopen and raises the possibility of increased airport fees. Vaccine passports will become the norm in most global destination” (Destination Canada 2021).

A quote from the Minister of Tourism, Jamaica, really places a spotlight on global cooperation. “We are thrilled to embark on this partnership with George Brown College as they establish a GTRCMC Satellite Centre in Canada. This Centre will be a Centre of excellence for research related to tourism resilience and an opportunity to exchange knowledge between our countries to benefit global tourism. This is a critical time in history for us to forge global partnerships in order to ensure the resilience of our industry.” (Hon. Edmund Bartlett).

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